

Story 1155 (1969 Tape 7) Narrator: İbrahim İçöz

Location: Senirce village,
İsparta kaza merkezi,
İsparta Province

Date: 1969

The Court of Jinns¹

There was a man from our village who was in the hospital at Denizli. While he was there he heard this story from another patient.

That second man said that once when he was watering his garden, he aimed the hose in a certain direction and then set it on the ground and allowed it to run by itself. But as soon as he left it, someone came along and changed its direction. After this had happened three or four times, he finally saw the man who was doing it. Very angry, he struck the intruder on the arm with his spade and broke his arm.

The injured man must have reported him to the police, for in a little while two police-soldiers² came and led him away.

¹ The word jinn suggests two very different kinds of supernatural creatures. The first is the huge supernatural being who comes forth from a bottle or appears in response to some signal, such as the rubbing of a magic lamp or ring. This creature then proceeds to give the caller supernatural or magic aid to achieve what he wishes. The other kind of jinn is never seen. It is a spiritual force referred to in some Sufi beliefs and in other mystical systems.

² There are no police forces per se in rural Turkey. Law and order are maintained by army units that have been turned over to the Ministry of Interior for that purpose. They are called gendarmes. They are, therefore, "police-soldiers" in a sense.

Story 1155

They took him to a cave in which there was something like a court

Ahmet Uysal: Who was operating this court?

Narrator: It is not known for certain.

Ahmet Uysal: Were they jinns?

Narrator: Probably.

Anyway, he was taken before those who held that court. They asked him, "Why did you strike this man's arm?"

"While I was watering my garden, he changed the direction of my hose. This happened several times, and when I finally caught him doing it, I lifted my spade and hit him with it."

After this trial was completed, the person who was serving as judge said to the defendant, "You must never tell anyone what you saw here today." He then gave the defendant a piece of paper and said, "Now go and bury this piece of paper beneath such-and-such a tree."³

The man went to that tree and buried the paper. He then went to the coffeehouse in the village and told all of his friends what had happened to him.

Before long, that man went crazy. That was the reason he had been put in the hospital.

³ We have no information about the meaning of this possibly ritualistic nature act.